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*RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN PALESTINE*

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While recent discovery in Palestine has added much to our knowledge of the peoples who lived there, it must be admitted that the results are, in comparison with those obtained in Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, disappointingly meagre. Some of the reasons for this are clear. Palestine was not, like the countries named, the seat of a great empire, with splendid palaces temples and tombs, with boundless wealth and luxury built on the tribute of the nations, with flourishing centres of art and literature. Much of the best that was produced in Palestine has been destroyed by the wars which have so often devastated the country. Still further, the sites where most might be expected, at least for the Hebrew period, yet await investigation—Jerusalem and Samaria. The former, being almost entirely built over, is likely to remain a sealed book. The latter, owing to its great size, would be an expensive undertaking, but not otherwise difficult. The whole mound might be explored, save the eastern end with its village and cemetery.

But though Jerusalem and Samaria, the centres of ancient Hebrew life, still keep their secrets, other sites have given much information, especially about the times before the Hebrew occupation of the land. We are, indeed, not a little surprised to find that where a Canaanite site was later occupied by the Hebrews, it is the earlier people who have left the ampler evidence of themselves. The fine specimens of pottery and bronze, revealing a taste for objects of artistic value, and the many articles of Babylonian, Egyptian, and Cypriote origin, showing active intercourse with foreign peoples, give a new idea of the state of culture attained by the early inhabitants of Canaan. Many a narrative or intimation in the Old Testament finds its confirmation or illustration in these discoveries.

The chief excavations have been carried on by Professor W. M.

Flinders Petrie and Doctor Frederick J. Bliss and his associates between 1890 and 1901, and by Mr. R. A. Stewart Macalister, Professor Ernst Sellin, and Doctor Gottlieb Schumacher, subsequently to the latter date.<sup>1</sup> The results of the earlier series have been set forth in book form, while those of the later series are to be found mainly in technical journals, not so easily accessible. One must also add, not so easily intelligible, owing in some cases to lack of plan or illustration, in others to the fact that the reports made during the progress of the work are liable to correction by subsequent reports. It is with the later series, therefore, that this paper chiefly deals. But the former, owing to their importance, call for a brief survey, because the principles deduced by the earlier explorers have guided the work of their successors.

A word of explanation is necessary regarding 'tells' and the methods of exploring them. *Tell*, 'hillock,' is the name applied by the natives to the mounds which mark the sites of ancient settlements. The mounds represent the accumulated débris and rubbish, which varies in depth from a few feet to sixty or more, according to the nature of the building material, the length of occupation, and the change of inhabitants. Such tells, of varying dimensions, abound in all parts of the country, but especially in the plains and on the edges of the plains. Underneath them is usually a slight elevation, at times the native rock. Their rounded shape and evenness of outline distinguish them from natural hills, and slight experience is sufficient to recognize them. The deposits of débris are arranged in strata, corresponding to the number of rebuildings and new occupations of the site. These strata, when undisturbed by later digging, are easily distinguishable. The successive strata contain the remains of the period to which they belong, objects in stone, metal, pottery, bone, or glass.

For a variety of reasons the exploration of such a tell by what might appear the natural method, the removal of an entire stratum before proceeding to the next lower, is not feasible. In view of the practical difficulties of doing this, the best method is to cut away the tell by sections down to the rock or virgin soil. Neither method

<sup>1</sup>The work of Doctor Bliss and Mr. Archibald Dickie, 1894-1897, outside the walls of Jerusalem (described in their *Excavations at Jerusalem*, London, 1898), is mainly a local topographical study, and is not included in this review.

has been applied to a whole tell, though Doctor Bliss applied the first to one-third of Tell el-Hesy. Mr. Macalister, while working at Gezer by sections, has not been able to follow the consecutive order. Elsewhere, explorers have had to content themselves with the very unsatisfactory method of trenches and shafts, enlarging these as indications might suggest.

A new era in Palestinian exploration was opened by the work of Professor Petrie at Tell el-Hesy in 1890.<sup>2</sup> Prepared by long experience in Egypt, Petrie's achievement was the discovery of the various strata at Lachish, the recognition of the successive types of pottery, and the assignment of relative dates to both. The mound had been so eaten away by the stream at its base and the wash of the rains that not much actual digging was necessary for the studies made by Petrie.

Tell el-Hesy lies on the edge of the Philistine plain about thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem. Its height of 120 feet, over half of which is artificial accumulation, makes it a conspicuous object from afar. The plateau is of irregular shape, with an average length of about 200 feet each way, and the slope on the steepest side, next the stream, is about forty-five degrees.

The latest objects found on the tell were fragments of Greek pottery of the fifth century B.C., whence Petrie concludes that the history of the tell closed in that century, say about 450 B.C. How many centuries are represented by the 60 feet of débris? No Egyptian objects being found to give a fixed point, recourse is had to the so-called "Phœnician" pottery, which occurs in the ruin from 20 to 45 feet below the top. The middle of this "Phœnician" ware is thus  $32\frac{1}{2}$  feet below the top. In Egypt the same ware occurs from 1400 to 800 B.C., the middle of the period being thus 1100. Assuming the same range of dates for Palestine, the upper  $32\frac{1}{2}$  feet of the mound will have grown between 1100 and 450 B.C., that is, in six centuries and a half. The rate is thus five feet to the century. If the rate for the whole tell were uniform, we should have twelve centuries for the accumulation, or 1650 B.C. for the first occupation. These results are, of course, given as approxi-

<sup>2</sup>W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Tell el-Hesy (Lachish)*, London, 1891.

mations only, working hypotheses awaiting correction or confirmation.

Does the tell contain other historical clues? Petrie sees such a clue in an extensive bed of ashes five feet thick, spread by the wind, beneath which is a stratum of rough building stones, indicating a time when huts were made of the rudest materials. These are at the level which ought to correspond to about 1200 B.C., and are believed by Petrie to represent the rude houses of the Hebrews in the time of the Judges. Below this stratum are massive city walls, designated by him "Amorite."

The earliest wall, of unburnt bricks resting on the native sand, would be of the seventeenth century B.C. It has been raised in height at several different times. On both sides of this wall were fragments of the earliest "Amorite" pottery. Above the stratum of rude stones likewise, at various depths, are stone walls, assigned by Petrie to the several rebuildings of Lachish which Hebrew kings are reported to have made.

The pottery as he describes it is as follows: At the lowest depths "Amorite" pottery, characterized by marks on the surface as if made by a comb ("comb facing"), spouts of peculiar shape, ledge handles, mouths made by a simple hole in the side of the vessel, bowls with thick brims, and polished facing. Above the "Amorite" level comes the "Phœnician" ware, distinguished by thin black-faced pottery, by *bilbils* (thin black vases with long necks), by soft, light drab pottery, by thin bowls, and by pottery painted on the outside with bistre. Then comes Jewish pottery, "styles which are neither Amorite nor Phœnician, but which consist of a mixture of characters. They are mostly red-brown with rough surface." Greek pottery begins to appear in the tell about 800 or 700 B.C. Of Seleucidan or Roman pottery there is none.

It will be seen that Petrie recognizes at Tell el-Hesi four types of pottery, which he calls Amorite, Phœnician, Jewish, and Greek. All his successors make the same distinctions, but with great differences as to the names which they employ. Having thus determined approximately the age of the tell, and noted the great divisions of Palestinian pottery, Petrie returned to his Egyptian explorations, leaving the details of the subject to be wrought out by other hands.

The identification of Tell el-Hesi with the important Canaanite and Jewish city Lachish, first proposed by C. R. Conder, while not strictly proved, is in a high degree probable. Petrie's reasons, in brief, for the identification are its commanding position, with the best water supply in the region; its approximate agreement with the distance of Lachish from Eleutheropolis (the modern Beit Jibrin) as stated in the Onomasticon; and the possibility of interpreting the successive cities in the light of the Biblical references to Lachish. There is no other tell in the vicinity whose appearance suggests such importance as we know that Lachish enjoyed. The cuneiform tablet found by Bliss in the third city adds to the probability of the identification. It mentions Zimrida, which was the name of a governor of Lachish in the el-Amarna correspondence, as we know from other tablets; but the tablet is very fragmentary, and the Zimrida referred to is not necessarily the governor.

In 1891-1892 Doctor Bliss cut away the northeast third of Tell el-Hesi down to the virgin soil at a depth of 65 feet.<sup>3</sup> In doing this he removed the remains of one city before proceeding to the next lower city. With larger material at hand he was able to distinguish more sharply than Petrie had done the several cities and the successive types of pottery, but did not fundamentally differ from Petrie's conclusions. He found evidence of eight occupations, three of which seem to represent two periods each. The depth of the foundations of these various settlements below the surface is 65, 53, 45, 37, 22, 18, 8, and 5 feet respectively. Between the third and fourth cities most of the surface is covered by the thick bed of ashes noted on the margin of the tell by Petrie. The part cut away by Bliss measured 100 by 120 feet at the top and 160 by 125 at the bottom. The first three or four settlements at Tell el-Hesi covered a much larger area than that of the tell, the accumulation over this larger space varying from a few feet to seventeen in depth. Later settlements were confined to the tell.

The most prominent object of the first city was the great city wall on the north, ten feet thick, and still about as high. The stream had cut away the eastern wall. House walls were so badly

<sup>3</sup>F. J. Bliss, *A Mound of Many Cities*, London, 1898.

preserved that it was hardly possible to recover the plans. The pottery shows the ledge handles, comb marking, peculiar spout, and other characteristics noted by Petrie. Bronze objects were wanting, but the year before at the same level in another part of the tell was found a chamber containing a battle-ax, spear heads, and adzes of this metal. In the second city were found two groups of chambers, and the lower portion of a circular blast furnace, seven feet in diameter, made of mud. The wall of the third city was partly worn away; what remained was 17 feet thick. From a rubbish heap beside some chambers came lance tips and fragments of pottery. In the same heap was found, on May 14, 1892, the cuneiform tablet already mentioned. The phraseology and the character of the script seem almost certainly to fix its date as that of the el-Amarna correspondence, in the fourteenth century. None of the objects associated with this tablet seem later than the time of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty. It certainly antedates the great bed of ashes lying above the third city. The bad condition of the tablet makes it uncertain who was the sender and who the receiver, but the indications are that the tablet was sent from some other town to the Egyptian governor stationed at Lachish. The bronze objects from the second and third cities include a spear head, chisels, a borer set in a bone handle, and a variety of pins and needles. The pottery shows a marked change from that of the first city. It represents the transition to the "Phœnician" style, which became prevalent in the fourth city. A few painted fragments from the second city resemble the finest Egyptian ware of the el-Amarna period.

The ash bed between the third and fourth cities varies in thickness from three to seven feet. That the period represented by it was not a long one appears from the fact that the same styles of pottery are found in the two cities. In the fourth city was found a well-built house, 56 feet square, with a symmetrical plan. Underneath the walls was a layer of yellow sand half an inch deep. The outer walls were  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick, the largest chamber 15 by 30 feet. At the same level, but in another part of the mound, 5 feet above the ash bed, Petrie came upon a building with decorative pilasters, the only ornamental stone work found in the tell. Among the remains of this city, in which two periods were recognized, were found

scarabs and seals, many objects in bronze, likewise stone objects such as dishes, pestles, and corn-grinders. This is the time when the "Phœnician" pottery is at its best, including pointed juglets, rough lamps and bowls, smooth bowls with peculiar handles, painted in bistre. Some of the bowls have strainer spouts. Bowls filled with sand and a lamp and covered by another bowl were found so often near foundations as to suggest some rite associated with house-building. Some of the best pottery of this date came from a spot outside the city limits. Bliss calls the spot a cemetery, though he found no human bones. There were many whole jars and vases filled with fine sand; a large jar frequently containing another of smaller size. The period yielded also a few specimens of rough painted ware, red and brown, and a fragment of a plate inscribed with three Phœnician letters. Iron objects occur for the first time at the top of the fourth city.

Around the fifth city there seems to be no wall. There is a series of extensive, complicated buildings, but whether barracks, bazaars, or something else does not appear. The sixth city had a massive northern wall. Both this and the house walls are ruined to the base. Bliss found a rude lamp-stand with seven Greek letters scratched across its base. Petrie found outside the wall a jar fragment with four Phœnician letters. Many bronze objects came from the fifth and sixth cities. The iron objects, beginning in the fourth city, included knives, chisels, spear and lance points. The seventh city was destroyed by fire, the marks of which are everywhere visible. Many granaries were found in the form of round pits in the earth, still common in Palestine. There were two houses in fairly good condition. One of the rooms contained a layer of burnt barley, five to eight inches deep. In another were many jars, mostly broken, containing seeds. The remains of the eighth city were almost entirely destroyed by moisture from the surface. "The characteristic pottery of cities V to VIII was the Jewish, i.e. coarse copies of the older Phœnician types." In cities VI to VIII types of Greek pottery were also found.

Reviewing the evidence of the inscribed materials, figured objects, metal tools and weapons, and pottery, Bliss reaches the following results as to the dates of the successive cities: Sub I, before 1700 B.C.; I, ca. 1600; Sub II, ca. 1550; II, ca. 1500; III, ca.



1450; Sub IV, ca. 1400; IV, ca. 1300; V, ca. 1000; VI, ca. 800; VII, ca. 500; VIII, ca. 400. These are of course meant for approximations only. Of the date 1450 for city III one may feel a good deal of confidence on account of the cuneiform tablet, when one recalls that from the following century we have many such tablets, sent to the Pharaohs by Egyptian officials stationed in Palestine, including several from the city of Lachish,<sup>4</sup> and others which make mention of the place.<sup>5</sup>

In the years 1898–1900 Doctor Bliss and Mr. Macalister excavated in four tells lying in the Shephelah a few miles to the north-east of Tell el-Hesi.<sup>6</sup> These tells are Zakariya, es-Safi, ej-Judeideh, and Sandahannah. This work put to the test the results obtained at Tell el-Hesi. Tell Zakariya, which rises 350 feet above a wady of the same name, is at the top about 1000 feet long, and half as wide at its widest point. The excavation consisted of trenches and pits at various points on the tell. The accumulation is of two kinds: an older, resting on the rock, from 2 to 10 feet thick, characterized by late pre-Israelite pottery; and an upper, from 4 to 9 feet thick, containing Jewish and Seleucidan ware. The main building was a large fortress belonging to the upper of the two strata. About it the débris varies from 13 to 24 feet thick. The fortress seems to be of Jewish origin.

Tell es-Safi, commonly identified with Gath, rises 300 feet above a wady lying near its foot. On it are a village, two cemeteries, and dense cactus hedges, which greatly limit the area of possible exploration. At its highest point, on the southern end, are the foundations of a Crusaders' castle built in 1144. The cliffs of the tell near this point rise precipitously from 100 to 150 feet. Along the slope at various points are seen portions of a ruin, perhaps the ancient city wall, enclosing a tract of irregular shape, about 400 by 200 yards. Pits dug at several points reached the rock at a depth of 41, 30, and 24½ feet respectively. The first 5 feet held Arab remains; the next 5, Jewish; thence to the rock, pre-Israelite, in an

<sup>4</sup> Hugo Winckler, *The Tell el-Amarna Letters*, New York, 1896, Nos. 217, 218.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* No. 181.

<sup>6</sup> *Excavations in Palestine during the years 1898–1900*, by F. J. Bliss and R. A. S. Macalister, London, 1902.

earlier and a later stratum. The pottery testifies to a continuous history from about 1700 B.C. down to Seleucid times. The city wall noted above seems to be from Jewish times, and may be the work of Rehoboam, who is said to have fortified Gath.<sup>7</sup> On the northeast plateau, at a depth ranging from 18 to 20 feet below the surface, and enclosed by walls, were found three upright monoliths, varying in height from 5 feet 10 inches to 7 feet 1 inch. These seem to have belonged to an ancient high place, of which a fine example was found later by Macalister at Gezer.

At Tell ej-Judeideh the excavation revealed traces of a city wall pierced by four gates flanked by towers. Near the middle of the enclosure was a Roman villa. The pottery and other data suggest that the site "was occupied in very early times, deserted before the Hebrew conquest, reoccupied by the Jews during the later days of the monarchy, and finally fortified at a comparatively late period, perhaps in Roman times." Tell Sandahannah was the site of a Seleucid town about seven acres in area, surrounded by a double wall. The tops of the house walls were found as a rule less than a foot below the surface of the ground. The town is roughly divided into streets, several of which are paved. The houses are complex in plan, with small chambers lighted from the street and from central courts. The date of this Seleucid town seems to be the third and the second century B.C. Many fragmentary Greek inscriptions were found. The clearing of a small section down to the rock passed through strata with Jewish pottery, showing that a Jewish settlement preceded the Seleucid.

The pottery found in the four Shephelah towns was of types similar to those from Tell el-Hesi, and in the same order. The enlarged study made possible by them confirmed the conclusions reached by Bliss at Tell el-Hesi. The names applied by him to the four great periods of the pottery are early pre-Israelite, late pre-Israelite, Jewish, and Seleucid. The first ends about 1500 B.C., the second extends into the period of the Hebrew monarchy, the third extends till about 300 B.C., the last beginning then and ending in the Roman period. The elaborate discussion of this subject, accompanied by a large number of plates, makes the *Excavations in Palestine* a valuable thesaurus of Palestinian pottery.

The results given in this book and those reached by Petrie and Bliss at Tell el-Hesi have formed the starting-point for subsequent excavations in the tells of Palestine.

The work of Mr. Macalister at Gezer is distinguished from that of other explorers in Palestine by the attempt to make a complete excavation of the site. This work extended from June 14, 1902, to August 30, 1905, and was taken up afresh in March, 1907. Regular reports of the progress of the work are given in the Quarterly Statements of the Palestine Exploration Fund. In *Bible Side-Lights from the Mound of Gezer*, 1906, Mr. Macalister has presented some of the results in popular form.

The way in which Gezer is spoken of in the el-Amarna correspondence shows that it was a place of importance. According to Joshua it successfully resisted the Hebrew invaders (Josh. 16 10). It was apparently Philistine territory in the time of David. Though acquired by Solomon and rebuilt by him (1 Kings 9 16-17), it seems never to have been important as a Jewish town. It was fortified against the Maccabees by Bacchides (1 Macc. 9 52), but a few years later Simon the Maccabee captured it and built therein a palace (1 Macc. 13 43-48). During the Crusades it was known as Mont Gisart.

The identification of Gezer with the present Tell ej-Jezari, made by Clermont-Ganneau in 1873, is beyond dispute.<sup>8</sup> The tell is about midway between Jerusalem and Jaffa, a little south of the wagon road connecting the two cities, beside the modern village Abu Shusheh. It lies east and west, is about 1700 feet long, and 300 broad in its narrowest part. It consists of two hillocks, an eastern and a western, with a depression between. On the western is a Moslem cemetery and the weli, or shrine of the local saint, beneath which one cannot excavate.

The first digging was on the eastern hill, and brought to light a burial cave cut in the rock underneath the débris, a circle of stones which showed marks of fire and seem to have been connected with a sanctuary, and many small objects of primitive type. There is pottery with ledge handles, comb facing and burnishing, as at Lachish; also scarab seals and fragments of Ægean ware.

<sup>8</sup> Clermont-Ganneau, *Archæological Researches in Palestine*, II, 224-275.

Two city walls were found; an outer, 14 feet wide by 12 high, strengthened by buttresses, and an inner, evidently earlier, of about the same size.

The burial cave showed two modes of burial, the earlier by cremation, the later by inhumation. The bed of ashes from burnt bodies covered about half the floor, being a foot thick at its deepest point. The general coherence of the bones, and a blackened hole, or flue, at one end of the cave showed that the cremation had taken place on the spot. The pottery resembled that from the lower levels at Lachish and elsewhere. Such study of the skulls and bones as their fragmentary condition allowed, led Professor Alexander Macalister, of Cambridge, to the conclusion that the cremated bodies were those of a pre-Semitic people. The bodies of the later burials were placed on stone platforms along the sides of the cave, or on the floor, and overlay in part the bed of ashes. Professor Macalister finds them of a taller, stronger, larger-boned race than the others, and apparently of Semitic stock, perhaps from the first wave of Semitic immigration. The large amount of pottery throughout the cave was almost perfectly preserved; that associated with the burnt bodies being distinctly older and coarser in quality.

A trench on the western hill revealed seven strata of debris, the seventh and topmost being Seleucidan. The sixth stratum yielded jar handles with Hebrew stamps, and is the upper limit of the bowl and lamp deposits beneath foundations, which begin in the fifth. In the latter stratum, also, iron first appears, though bronze is the prevailing metal. The pottery is transitional from pre-Israelite to Jewish types. In the fourth and third layers occur scarabs of the Egyptian Middle Empire, and bronze is the only metal. The second stratum yielded rude pottery, but no metal was found; while the lowest stratum is represented by certain troglodyte dwellings, with rude implements of flint and bone, and very rough porous pottery. It is possible that what has been designated the second stratum was contemporaneous with these. Mr. Macalister's provisional dating is as follows: I and II, 3000-2000 B.C.; III-IV, 2000-1400; V, 1400-1000; VI, 1000-600; VII, 600-1.

A large cistern cut in the rock in the second period was used as a burial cave in the third. In it were fourteen male skeletons and

the upper half of a female, along with fine bronze weapons, spear heads, knives, and the like. A group of caves, entered by rock-cut steps, represents troglodyte dwellings. The pottery, in ware, form, and ornament resembles the earliest found elsewhere in Palestine. Objects of domestic use are of flint and stone. Two skeletons were found, an adult and an infant. One of the caves, communicating with another by a narrow curved passage, is thought by Mr. Macalister to have been used as an oracle chamber in connection with the sanctuary above it.

The most notable feature of this sanctuary, or high place, is a series of eight large monoliths, standing in a row north and south, and the stumps of two others. Two of these stones projected above the surface before the digging began. They stand on a platform of stone which has an average height of three feet above the native rock. Prostrate beneath this platform was a ninth column. There is much variety in the size of the stones. The tallest, 10 feet 9 inches high, is also the thickest (2 feet 3 inches); the broadest is 5 feet wide; the shortest and smallest is 5 feet 5 inches high. The intervals between the stones vary from 3 feet 2 inches to 17 feet 6 inches; but in the latter case a stone has been lost from the space. The resemblance to a phallus which Mr. Macalister sees in one of the stones cannot be called obtrusive. He notes on its western face a couple of shallow "cup marks and grooves." This stone is of a kind not occurring in the immediate vicinity of Gezer. The line of the stones varies but slightly from a straight line. About the middle of the row and close beside it on the west is a large rectangular block of stone with a rectangular hole cut in its upper surface. The hole is 2 feet 10 inches by 1 foot 11 inches, and 1 foot 4 inches deep. There is no sign of fire. Mr. Macalister thinks it may have been a socket to support an Asherah, or more probably a basin to contain water for ablutions.

The temple area, including these columns and the "oracle" cave, covered a space of uncertain extent. Its floor level was probably that of the stone platform about the columns. In the stratum below this level were many large jars with pointed bottoms containing what remained of the skeletons of infants. The jars were full of earth, and within or beside them were usually two or

three smaller vessels, especially a bowl and a jug. Mr. Macalister thinks that none of the infants can have been more than a week old. Two of them had been burnt, and he feels sure that all of them were sacrificed, probably as the first-born. He explains in the same way similar burials found at Ta'anach and at Lachish. The jars at the latter place were filled with fine white sand. In the rock surface below the floor were several cup holes. All the strata above it, except the topmost, contained "an enormous quantity of objects emblematic of nature worship." These are made of stone, brick, pottery, bone, horn, and marble. In all the strata were terra-cotta plaques with figures in low relief representing the "mother goddess." It would seem therefore that this spot remained sacred through successive occupations of the tell. Further discoveries in the temple precincts include the figure of a serpent in bronze, and two child burials with clear traces of fire. The children were about six years old. In a trench south of the temple, in the Jewish strata, were found bones of children under house walls or built into them, suggesting foundation sacrifices. An enormous pool, doubtless a reservoir for water, of Maccabæan date, cut over 50 feet deep into the rock, was cleared of its stones, débris, and silt. Of several caves one is noteworthy for a large number of cup holes in its floor, some 10 inches deep and 18 inches across. Outside the tell, on the slope of a hill to the south, some rock-cut Seleucid graves were examined, one of which was closed by a rolling stone.

Summing up the results of the work of the first two years, Mr. Macalister finds that the earliest inhabitants were troglodytes, who practiced cremation, knew the sheep, cow, pig, and goat, made pottery by hand, and at times ornamented it. The first Semitic invasion he would place at about 2500 B.C. These Semites, he thinks, had relations with Egypt as early as the twelfth dynasty. They made, or began, the great megalithic high place; practised sacrifice of the first born and foundation sacrifice; had many varieties of grain for food; made pottery of the so-called early pre-Israelite type; were strongly influenced by Egypt, but much less by Babylon. The late Semitic period comes with the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan, but these seem never to have held undisputed possession of Gezer.

A new cut across the western hill is 38½ feet deep, and reveals eight strata of buildings. In this section was found a cuneiform tablet, and later a second near the same place. They are records of business transactions from the years 647 and 649 B.C., at a time when Judah was tributary to Assyria. The discovery suggests the presence of an Assyrian garrison or colony at Gezer. Although Gezer figures prominently in the el-Amarna correspondence, no tablets of that era have yet been found on the site.

Of the city walls there were really three; remains of a small earth wall built perhaps by the original inhabitants, and the two massive stone walls already mentioned. The relative age of these is shown by the fact that the inner wall crosses the earth wall at one point, and is in turn partly overlaid by the outer. The outer, it thus appears, is the later, built to replace the inner and give a larger surface to the city. Three strata of buildings overlie the inner wall. Within a chamber in the lowest of these was found a scarab of Amenhotep III and his queen. At another point was found a great gateway through this inner wall, flanked with brick towers. The houses above these towers yielded a large number of objects, scarabs, beads, pottery, among which "every datable object was contemporary with Amenhotep III," while "several of them bore his name." These facts seem to show that the inner wall was in ruins in the el-Amarna period. The outer wall was traced entirely around the tell, and is about 4500 feet long. Thirty of its buttress towers were examined. They are later additions to the wall, only two of them being bonded with it; and it is suggested that they may have been added at the time of Solomon's restoration of the city. Six of these towers are in turn strengthened by bastion-like additions, which may be a part of the work of rebuilding by Bacchides.

Outside the city on the northwest three shaft tombs were found, two circular, and one rectangular; all having a burial chamber on one side at the bottom of the shaft. They were empty of bones, but contained scarabs and early forms of pottery and bronze. So many of the objects in one of the tombs were Egyptian in character as to suggest that the grave may have belonged to an Egyptian. The scarabs seem to date from the twelfth or thirteenth dynasty. Many Maccabæan and Christian tombs were examined on the

northern and eastern slopes of the tell and on the slope of the hill south of the tell. All the unrifled Maccabæan tombs contained ossuaries. Along the line of the outer wall on the south lies a very large building of many chambers, completely looted, which seems to be Maccabæan. After this opinion had been formed on the basis of other evidence, a fragment of a building stone was found in the structure with a Greek inscription which may be translated: (says) "Pampras, may fire follow up the palace of Simon." The structure may therefore be the palace built at Gezer by Simon the Maccabee, and the imprecation may have been concealed in the wall by some enemy of his.

On the western hill was found a complicated series of connecting caves, believed to have been a troglodyte dwelling subsequently used for burial. There are ten chambers, one of which has its floor covered by circular cup marks, forty-six in number, with vertical sides and flat bottoms. Another chamber has beneath its floor a bell-shaped cistern, which seems to have been itself originally a lower chamber reached by a stairway. This chamber was deepened into a cistern, and the steps built over and concealed by masonry in order to make the mouth of the cistern circular. Two of the chambers in this series of caves had not been looted by robbers, being hidden by fallen rock. One of them contained several groups of pottery, one or two pieces of which were of unusual form. The other was rich in pottery and alabaster, and contained a number of gold-mounted scarabs, a fine bronze-gilt kohl-pencil, beads, etc. The scarabs from these various chambers of this series are all from the Egyptian Middle Empire.

In the eastern hill were unearthed two tombs of masonry, the first of this kind found in the tell, covered with great blocks of stone. The first is that of a man, and contained fine alabaster vessels, a glass vase, a scaraboid with engraving of Assyrian type, and a four-handled vessel of black pottery. The second is that of a woman, and contained beautiful vessels in silver and bronze, a bronze hand-mirror, an armlet, anklets, scarabs, and fragments of alabaster vessels. In each tomb was also an iron knife. Two similar graves were found later. One of these contained rare deposits in pottery, bronze, and silver. The object of greatest beauty was a cylindrical bar of polished jasper about an inch



and a half long. Around it are three ornamental gold bands, with a loop on one side, and a small disc of gold hanging from the opposite side of the band. For a variety of reasons Mr. Macalister believes these burials to be Philistine, an opinion with which J. L. Myres is disposed to agree.<sup>9</sup>

The report in the Quarterly Statement for October, 1907, records the discovery of cave sepulchres of the second Semitic period, with a new type of pottery; an unbaked clay tablet with seal impression, some of the figures on which suggest the signs of the zodiac; a fine seal in the Babylonian style; another row of columns similar to the great row already described; and, about a mile distant from the tell, the remains of a large Roman bath.

The work of Professor Sellin, in 1902-1905, at Ta'anach, on the southern edge of the Great Plain, may be more briefly described.<sup>10</sup> The history of Ta'anach antedates the Hebrew conquest. The place was captured by Thothmes III; seems to be mentioned in a fragmentary tablet of the el-Amarna correspondence; resisted the Hebrew invaders (Josh. 12 21), and was the scene of the battle celebrated in Deborah's Song (Judges 5 19). It seems not to have become really Israelite before the time of Solomon (1 Kings 4 12); but has little importance in later Hebrew history.

The tell lies north and south, and is triangular with rounded angles. The plateau at the top has an average length of 1100 feet, with an average breadth of 520, and rises between 130 and 160 feet above the plain. Except a central plateau, 490 by 360 feet in area, the tell is cultivated. On the north and northwest the slope descends by large terraces to the plain. Sellin's method was to sink pits at various points, and to run trenches from the edge of the tell toward the middle, widening these where indications demanded it. About one-sixth or one-seventh of the area was thus dug over. As at Lachish and Gezer, the débris at Ta'anach is deposited in strata. Sellin recognizes four periods, each of which is divisible into an earlier and a later half. The pottery of the first period is characterized by red ware with comb facing,

<sup>9</sup> Quarterly Statement, 1907, pp. 240-243.

<sup>10</sup> Ernst Sellin, *Tell Ta'anek*, Vienna, 1904; *Eine Nachlese auf dem Tell Ta'anek in Palästina*, Vienna, 1905.

and the vessels are mostly flat-bottomed; that of the second, by grayish or olive-colored ware with the brown ladder-pattern decoration, and by the pointed jug; the third period is that of Greek influence. There are no Seleucidan or Roman remains; the fourth period is Arabic.

Fifteen cisterns were found, and Sellin estimates that the tell contains a hundred. Basalt utensils came from all the periods. Flint knives and arrow heads were numerous. In the third period they were rare, iron having taken the place of flint. Bronze was confined mostly to the first two periods, and included knives, spear heads, arrow heads, chisels, and objects of personal use or adornment; among the latter were the gold bracelets and other jewelry of a Canaanite woman. Six houses of considerable size were found. The most important is a castle on the west side of the mound, belonging to the upper half of the first period. From the same stratum, but a little earlier, is a building in the north, where were found twelve cuneiform tablets and fragments of the el-Amarna period. Of a city wall only a small part was uncovered, apparently from the first period. The main city wall is no doubt to be sought on the slope of the tell as at Tell Mutesellim. There were several caves, cut in the rock, which may have been used as houses, or cisterns, or graves. Many earthen jars were found in which young children had been buried; Sellin thinks that in some cases, at least, the children had been offered in sacrifice.

The two discoveries of greatest significance are the cuneiform tablets and an altar of incense; the latter from one of the random pits dug in the southern half of the tell. Its discovery suggests what surprises may still be concealed at Ta'anach. The tablets had probably been preserved in the pottery chest beside which some of them were found. As late as Jeremiah's time important writings were kept in earthenware vessels (Jer. 32 14). Those tablets on which the receiver's name is preserved are addressed to one Ishtar-washur, and probably all were so directed. The house in which they were found may have been his residence; and it is conjectured that he was the local governor, subject to Egypt.

Guli-Addi, one of the writers, after greeting Ishtar-washur, offers to send him silver; and among other things calls on him to

give his daughter, when old enough, to the king (namely, of Egypt). Another correspondent, Ahi-yami, invokes on Ishtar-washur the blessing of "the lord of the gods," refers to some weapons which he had received, inquires whether certain cities have been recovered, and proposes to send a messenger to Ishtar-washur. Both these writers, judging from their names, are Canaanites, but no doubt vassals of Egypt.<sup>11</sup> A third writer, Aman-hashir by name, is more probably an Egyptian; perhaps a general or a commissioner. In one of his despatches he instructs Ishtar-washur to send to Megiddo, on the next day, his brothers with their chariots, a horse as tribute, presents, and all prisoners then in his hands. In a second letter Aman-hashir writes from Gaza, reproving Ishtar-washur for not coming to him and not sending him troops. Three other tablets, in a fragmentary condition, are lists of men, it may be subjects of Ishtar-washur. The remaining fragments are too small to tell any story at all.

From the el-Amarna correspondence found in Egypt in 1887 we learned that native princes in Palestine, in the fourteenth century B.C., regularly employed the Babylonian language and script in their communications with the Egyptian court; and it is natural to suppose that replies came back in the same language. What is new in these Ta'anach letters is that within Palestine itself Babylonian is the medium of epistolary intercourse. This, taken in connection with other evidence of Babylonian relations with the Mediterranean coast, would seem to imply long possession of the land by Babylon, during which the language gained such a hold that for communication by writing it continued in use after the country passed from Babylonian control.

The altar of incense, made of hard terra-cotta, comes from the lower stratum of the third period, and seems to date from between 800 and 500 B.C. The reliefs upon it suggest the period of the later Assyrian kings. It was found in thirty-six pieces, which when put together formed an almost complete hollow altar nearly 3 feet high; the sides of the base being about 18 inches long, and the walls from 1 to 2 inches thick. The upper part contracted

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Friedrich Hrozný, the translator of these tablets, suggests (Tell Ta'anek, p. 116) that the name Ahi-yami is the same as the Hebrew Ahijah (Ahi-Yahu, Ahi-Yahweh), but Sellin justly remarks that this is only a possibility (ibid. p. 109).

gradually in size, and on the top was a shallow depression, 12 inches in diameter. In this, it is supposed, incense was put, and heated by a fire kindled beneath. The altar had no bottom; several holes in the walls may have been designed to admit air to the fire, in a manner well known in Palestine today. The rim of the dish is decorated with rings or eyes. Below the dish on the right side is a handle in the form of a decorative ram's horn. A corresponding handle on the left side had been broken off and could not be found. The side walls are decorated with figures in relief. On the right are three composite creatures, sphinxes or cherubim, with wings, the bodies of quadrupeds, and beardless human heads looking toward the front. The noses are sharp; the head-covering a three-cornered cap with decorated edges and with tassels. Above two of these figures are lions whose fore paws rest on the human heads. On the left side is a series of five similar monsters, and besides these a man strangling a serpent with his left hand, and apparently piercing it with a dagger held in the right hand. On the front wall near the bottom is a conventional sacred tree, on either side of which is a rampant ibex of a type familiar on Babylonian seals, Egyptian scarabs, and elsewhere. This altar, with its decorative motives derived from Egyptian and Assyrian or Babylonian art, was in all probability Israelite. From the story of the visit of Ahaz to Damascus (2 Kings 16) we know that there was in his time a fondness for imitation of foreign altars. Fragments of figures which had formed part of a second altar were also found five or six rods from the first; in neither place was there any evidence of the existence of a temple.

The earliest settlements on the tell may have been about 2000 B.C.; at least it was long before the date of the cuneiform tablets (fourteenth century). The earliest occupants do not seem to have been cave-dwellers, as they were at Gezer. The absence of Seleucid pottery indicates that Ta'anach had ceased to be inhabited before the Hellenistic period; Sellin surmises that it was destroyed in the time of Josiah by the Egyptians or the Scythians.

During three weeks in April, 1907, Sellin dug several trial pits in the tell of ancient Jericho.<sup>12</sup> The walls of several buildings

<sup>12</sup>Mittheilungen und Nachrichten des deutschen Palaestina-Vereins, 1907, pp. 65 ff.

were brought to light; also much pottery, all of which seems to antedate Hebrew times, and to show that there never was a Hebrew settlement on this mound. The work of exploration here is to be continued. The tell measures about 1200 feet by 585, with an average height of 33 feet above the plain. A Canaanite fortress of unburnt bricks on the northwest is the best preserved building of the kind yet discovered in Palestine. Among the potsherds in this building were some of great excellence, decorated with figures of animals in relief recalling Babylonian representations. Two bronze axes were found, and also twenty-two small clay tablets, just like those used for cuneiform writing, but uninscribed. A section of a wall about 10 feet thick and 10 high was uncovered, which is thought to be the city wall. In the ruins of private houses was found pottery covering a long period, from the most primitive to the most beautiful types. Oil and wine jars buried in the floors of the oldest city attest their high age by the coarse clay of which they are made, the flat bottoms, and the wavy ledge handles.

The important work done at Tell Mutesellim by Doctor Gottlieb Schumacher in 1903-1905 has been only briefly reported.<sup>13</sup> The tell lies about an hour northwest of Tell Ta'annek, and is part of the ancient Megiddo, now represented by the extensive ruins called Lejjūn. Its fine water supply, and its position at the point where the main road from the south crosses the mountains and enters the Great Plain, gave importance to Megiddo in early times. The place was captured by Thothmes III about 1500 B.C., and the rich booty there taken gives an idea of the wealth of the city.<sup>14</sup> It figures in the el-Amarna correspondence, and in the Old Testament is usually mentioned in connection with Ta'anach. It was fortified by Solomon, was the place where Ahaziah died, and where Josiah lost his life.<sup>15</sup> The tell rises about 120 feet above the plain by a slope of about thirty degrees. Its top is a plateau about 1020 feet by 750 in area, cultivated in grain, as are also the slopes. The surface pottery is at the latest as early as the fifth century B.C.

<sup>13</sup>In the *Mittheilungen und Nachrichten des deutschen Palaestina-Vereins*, 1903-1906.

<sup>14</sup>J. H. Breasted, *History of Egypt*, p. 292.

<sup>15</sup>1 Kings 9 15, 2 Kings 9 27 23 29.

This shows that there was no Seleucidan nor Roman occupation of this mound, though the lower fields of Lejjūn have yielded many Roman remains, including tiles with the stamp of the Sixth Legion. The method of exploring the tell was by trenches and pits, as at Ta'anach, and perhaps not more than a sixth of the area was turned over. The deposit seems much thicker than at Ta'anach; at one spot a pit sixty-five feet deep did not reach the rock.

Of the great mass of details in the reports only a few items can be given here. The types of pottery and bronze were much the same as at Gezer and Ta'anach. A shaft at the northern foot of the tell struck a cistern, and near it a large chamber with an airhole in the middle of the roof, beneath which was a mass of human bones. The pottery in the chamber was chiefly of the oldest types, but there were also some later forms. A massive city wall was found at various points by running trenches down the slopes. This wall is everywhere 16 to 20 feet below the present plateau. On the east the thickness of the wall was about 28 feet, much stronger, therefore, than the walls of Gezer. On the southern edge of the tell were uncovered the ruins of a city gate measuring 57 by 36 feet, estimated to date from the seventeenth or sixteenth century B.C.

Three great buildings were found. The first, in the southern part of the tell, at a depth of about 11 feet, was of the best masonry in the tell, and is believed by Schumacher to be of Solomonic origin. Above this building, only 40 inches below the surface, was found a jasper seal stone bearing a Hebrew inscription, which is considered the most important discovery thus far made on the tell. The stone is oval and polished. Its face is 3.7 by 2.7 centimetres, and is finely engraved with a figure of a lion in the Assyrian style. Below the lion, in a script closely resembling that of the Moabite stone, is an inscription in two lines reading, (belonging) "To Shema, servant of Jeroboam." Professor Emil Kautzsch, at the close of a long discussion of the seal,<sup>16</sup> concludes that the Jeroboam is one of the two Hebrew kings who bore that name, more likely the second. Another seal, with the name Asaph, was found near the same spot, but about five feet lower down.

At a depth of about 15 feet from the surface (lower, therefore,

<sup>16</sup> *Mittheilungen und Nachrichten*, 1904, pp. 1 ff.

than the "Solomonic" building) were found bronze objects, seemingly of a sacrificial character. Three or four rods resting on a ring of bronze converge to a point at the upper end, and support a column on which rests the sacrificial dish. There are other indications of the sacredness of the site, especially twelve stones, which, the explorer thinks, are from a high place intentionally overthrown.

A second building, near the middle of the tell, is of Canaanite origin. A large part of this was traced and cleared. A pit was dug therein, 28 feet deep, through seven strata of building, to the rock, of which 28 square yards were cleared. The rock was worn smooth, and its surface contained cup holes, large and small. It was covered with a mud floor without filling in the cup holes. In the two lowest strata (numbered respectively six and seven) were found fragments of pottery of primitive character, utensils of basalt and bronze, and part of a rhinoceros tooth. Some of the graves of the fifth stratum had at the eastern end a sharp stone marked by a hole cut in one side. Underneath the foundations of the Canaanite building were walls of the same construction as those of the Egyptian building to be next described, also a layer of ashes, suggesting that the Egyptian city was burnt before the Canaanite building was erected.

South of the Canaanite building, but one stratum deeper, was another large building, called by Schumacher the Egyptian building, because of the large number of Egyptian objects found therein. Very noteworthy were three chambers in masonry, two of which are certainly tombs; the other a tomb or a store chamber. One of these contained forty-two vessels of most varied form; and one of the five skeletons held in his hand four scarabs encased in gold. This chamber was entered by a narrow passage communicating with a circular walled shaft. This Egyptian building contains many chambers, mostly small, as well as store rooms with amphoras, round pits, oil cisterns, and numerous graves. One shaft was sunk to a depth of forty-two feet below the surface without reaching the rock. Of the numerous smaller objects from this building may be mentioned utensils made of flint, eighteenth dynasty beads, bright red pottery, and other pottery of primitive types. Between the Canaanite and Egyptian buildings was found what seems to have

been a place of worship, of which the main feature was three stones, once perpendicular, covered by a fourth stone, all now fallen down. These were in a shallow pit with plastered sides. There was also a large pointed stone and a basalt vessel in the pit. A yard or more distant was a second pit, containing ashes, coals, and burnt bones of animals. The pits were enclosed by a stone wall.

The excavation of a fine synagogue of the Roman period at Tell Hum (Capernaum?) in April and May, 1905, by the German Orient-Gesellschaft has been briefly reported.<sup>17</sup> At Tell Hum are extensive ruins but no considerable mound. The synagogue was covered by only a small accumulation of earth, and its site is about 250 feet from the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. In size the building is 58 by 80 feet. On the sides of the nave and at the rear end was a colonnade, which supported a loft or gallery. At the south end was a large central door and two side doors, and the roof was gable-shaped. About the doors, above the columns, and elsewhere, was much carving of fine execution, representing animals, eagles, garlands, fruits, flowers, and geometrical designs. In many cases this has been intentionally mutilated. The material of the building is nearly all on the site, making possible, when the digging is finished, a complete restoration of the plans. If this be the synagogue built for the nation by the centurion, the place where Jesus worshipped and taught, unusual interest attaches to the building.

In the winter of 1906-1907, two important Canaanite cemeteries at Samieh were extensively robbed by the fellahin. The site is about six hours north of Jerusalem by horse, and two hours east of the wagon road running north from that city. It is a fertile basin, irrigated by a fine spring, and surrounded by lofty mountains. The cemeteries are on the gentle slopes along the edge of the cultivated tract. There are three forms of graves; shallow sunken tombs with burial spaces hewn out on either side, and in some cases at one end; rectangular chambers cut in the face of the rock, with small receptacles, the so-called *kokim*, radiating from the chamber walls; and shaft tombs. The last named, of which more than a hundred were plundered, are circular wells,

<sup>17</sup> *Mitteilungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin*, December, 1905, pp. 14 ff.



communicating at the bottom with one or more chambers hewn in the rock. These chambers are circular or oval, with roofs roughly dome-shaped, and are in some cases fifteen feet or more in diameter. They are of Canaanite origin, and only two such have hitherto been reported (at Gezer). The same plan is found in one of the Mutesellim tombs, but this is of masonry. A large mass of pottery and bronze objects has come from these tombs at Samieh, much of it of excellent quality. Comparison of it with similar material from the lower levels of the excavated tells leaves no doubt as to its Canaanite origin.

What, now, has been our gain from the very considerable amount of digging which has here been reviewed? The great direct gain, it must be confessed, pertains to the earlier history of the country, to communities and the culture in general, rather than to individuals or to specific historical events. Of the earlier populations we now know their massive city walls and the materials and plans of their houses, their weapons and household utensils, the foods which they ate and the animals which served them, their methods of burial, and something of their religious beliefs and practices, the stage of their advance in art, and their intercourse with the outside nations—Egypt, Babylon, and the islands of the Mediterranean. This must be considered a welcome enlargement of our knowledge.

Whether the early populations of Palestine were accustomed to make and preserve written records we cannot say positively, but the indications are that they were not, at least not in their native tongue. The only writings found are Egyptian and Babylonian. It is not unnatural to suppose that the latter tongue, which was used for official intercourse with Egypt and in Palestine itself, was also employed for local records, but this can at present be considered only a conjecture.

The direct gain for the Hebrew period is not nearly so great as for the earlier times. Some reasons were suggested at the beginning of this paper. Another, of perhaps greater importance, is that the Hebrew civilization in its material elements was not very different from that of the Canaanites. The Hebrews made their contribution to culture in less tangible form, in literature,

morals, and religion. In other particulars they fell below their predecessors, adding little that was either distinctive or that indicated an advance. The Hebrew immigration, as Mr. Macalister has recently remarked, "did not affect the progress of culture to the extent supposed," and it had, he thinks, no "obvious influence on the development of civilization in Gezer."<sup>18</sup> In the fusion of elements to which the Book of Judges bears witness we may be sure that the new-comers received more than they gave. But though the positive gain for the Hebrew period is relatively small, the indirect gain is great. For the more we know of conditions in Palestine before the Hebrew invasion, the better we shall understand how deeply the Hebrews were influenced by those conditions. The phase of the subject of which we hear most in the Old Testament is in regard to the Canaanite religion, whose attractions the Hebrews could not resist. What do the excavations tell us on this point?

The accounts of excavations often speak of high places, altars, standing columns, cup holes, sanctuaries, and sacrifice. In no direction have the explorers been more alert than in their search for objects of religious interest. It is therefore but natural that some of their identifications should awaken skepticism. Many of the standing stones thought to be *masseboth* (pillars connected with the cultus) seem to be only the lower parts of columns for supporting the roof. Phallic worship, the practice of which has been deduced from standing columns and from small objects found scattered through the strata, seems to require evidence of a more positive character. Many of the burials interpreted as human sacrifices need not be sacrifices at all. Particularly is this true of the infant burials. Other reasons besides sacrifice might be suggested for the burial of infants near a high place, as at Gezer. Even the marks of fire on the bones of two infants hardly constitute proof. That the Canaanites practised child sacrifice is not unlikely, when we recall the stories of Abraham and Isaac, of Jephthah's daughter, and of the practice of the later Hebrew kings. To argue from the tender age of the supposed victims that they represented sacrifices of the first born is, of course, still less convincing. The conclusion must be that the

<sup>18</sup> Quarterly Statement for July, 1907, p. 203.

theory of child sacrifice to account for the death of these young children is not made out.

The case for foundation sacrifices seems to rest on stronger evidence. In a house at Gezer was found the skeleton of an old woman "built into a space left vacant at the corner"; "the position of the skeleton relative to the walls left no doubt that they were placed there at the same time."<sup>19</sup> Both at Gezer and at Megiddo skeletons have so often been found immediately beneath house walls as to make the theory of foundation sacrifice seem not improbable. It is thought that the story of the rebuilding of Jericho by Hiel with the death of his first-born and his youngest son (1 Kings 16 34) may refer to this custom.<sup>20</sup>

Our knowledge of cup holes has been increased in two directions. First, we now know that their use begins in very early times, since they are found cut in the rock underneath the débris of the oldest occupations at some of the sites excavated. Secondly, that they had at times religious significance is made more probable by their occurrence and peculiar arrangement in the floors of some of the early caves at Gezer. The practice of cutting these holes must have continued for a very long time. One who travels through the country today comes across them constantly. Their great frequency in one of the cemeteries at Samieh seems to imply some connection with burial customs. At other places they doubtless served different ends. Other uses suggested by Doctor Schumacher are to support pointed jars and sacrificial columns, and to receive libations of water.<sup>21</sup>

Of the notable object ornamented with figures in relief found by Sellin at Ta'anach no interpretation seems so probable as that it is an altar for incense. Some of the bronze dishes on the top of rods rising from feet resting on rings may well have the same use. The great religious discovery of which we need feel no doubt is the high place at Gezer with its standing megaliths, the most imposing object found in any of the tells. Taken in connection with the similar but smaller series at Tell es-Safi and

<sup>19</sup> Macalister, *Bible Side-Lights*, p. 169.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* p. 166; cf. Joshua 6 26.

<sup>21</sup> *Mittheilungen und Nachrichten*, 1906, p. 12. Schumacher compares the pouring out of water before Jehovah, 1 Samuel 7 6, 2 Samuel 23 16.

with some of the standing columns at Ta'anach and Megiddo, the Gezer stones aid us greatly in picturing to ourselves the *masseboth* which were so prominent a feature in Hebrew worship till a late period in the national life. In a pit near it was found a large quantity of bones, which were possibly the remains of sacrificial victims. A pit with bones was also found near what seems to have been an altar at Megiddo. Such pits, we may suppose, were found at Hebrew shrines as well. The bones in the Gezer pit were human as well as animal, a circumstance which ends additional weight to the theory of human sacrifice.

But I must repeat that thus far the value of the excavations for the Hebrew period has been indirect rather than direct. To some readers this paper may seem not to attach sufficient importance to interpretations offered by the explorers. But it is better to understate than to overstate the results. Those who wish to see a fuller treatment of the subject, may find it in the admirable book of Professor Hugues Vincent of the Dominican School at Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> It is hoped that the permit to excavate Samaria just granted by the Turkish government to Harvard University may lead to discoveries of more direct bearing on Hebrew history and religion.

<sup>22</sup> *Canaan d'après l'exploration récente*, Paris, 1907.